

Topic - Restoration Comedy.

B.A. Part II (Hon)

Sub - English

Paper - III Faculty - Arts (Literature)

Q- Consider The Way of the World as a perfect example of comedy of manners....

Ans. It is to be noted that the dramatists of Restoration period concentrated only on one type of comedy - the comedy of manners. The way of the world is a satirical picture of the society prevailing during the period.

The way of the world deals entirely with the manners and life of London. All the characters in the way of the world except Sir Wilful are over-possessive with the tone and tenor of London spirit. Sir Wilful alone comes into this life from outside and does not

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fully merge with its spirit and as can be expected, he wants to go out of it on his own travels. Witwoud, represents this society at its worst. He considers it unfashionable even to recognize his half-brother..

The generic mannerisms of the Way of the World are laid in the Lady Nishfort's bedroom or parlour as a London park. Mirabell has had an affair with a young widow and they suspected that she might be in the family way.

The heroine Millamant is a versatile and virtuous young widow. She loves Mirabell but she takes delight in being courted by Petulant and Witwoud.

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The dramatists of this age reflects the theme of marriage as "hollowness at its best." Millamant loves Mirabell but is most reluctant to get married.

Love urban based intrigue and trickery is the main theme of Restoration comedies and this is the plot that drives the drama *The Way of the World*. The play is only concerned with the intrigues of Mirabell to win the hand of Millamant. Last but not the least he pretends to show love to Lady Wishfort so that to get room to her niece, Millamant. But when it meets failure, Mirabell hatches a deeper plot. The urge for husband by the old lady is irresistible. As a result he gets his

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servant, Waitwell married to Lady Hirstfort's maid-servant, Jaible and then sends Waitwell in the disguise of his uncle.

Hence The Way of the world is uniquely imbued with the Restoration comedy of manners. But some clinching features of Congreve's consciousness and thought maintain borderline between low moral pitch and moderate moral pitch. In this way William Congreve distinguishes himself from other dramatists of the Restoration comedy.

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